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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 28, 1996

JUL 19 1996

CONTACT: David Moulton
(202) 225-2836

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

MEDIA ADVISORY: PRESS CONFERENCE ON CHILDREN'S TV RULES

WASHINGTON, DC -- Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-MA), congressional colleagues and child advocacy organizations will hold a press conference on Wednesday, May 29, 1996 regarding their efforts to set a minimum of 3 hours per week of educational children's television as a condition for holding a license to use the public airwaves for broadcasting.

EVENT: PRESS CONFERENCE
WHEN: WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 1996
TIME: 11:30 AM
WHERE: ROOM HC-9
THE CAPITOL BUILDING

Rep. Markey authored the Children's Television Act of 1990 which, for the first time, required television broadcasters to serve the educational and informational needs of children in their viewing area as a condition of having their federal license renewed. A rulemaking is pending at the Federal Communications Commission that would spell out those requirements, including the minimum requirement of 3 hours per week.



Press Packet

**Signed Copy of Bi-Partisan Letter
List of Signatories (State-by-State)
as of May 29, 1996 (A.M.)
List of Groups supporting the 3-Hour Rule
Markey Statement**

EDWARD J. MARKEY
7TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

COMMERCE COMMITTEE
RANKING MEMBER
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND
FINANCE
RESOURCES COMMITTEE
COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN EUROPE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2107

2133 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-2107
(202) 225-2836

DISTRICT OFFICES
5 HIGH STREET, SUITE 101
MEDFORD, MA 02155
(617) 398-2900
188 CONCORD STREET, SUITE 102
FRAMINGHAM, MA 01701
(508) 875-2900

May 1996

The Honorable Reed Hundt, Chairman
The Honorable James Quello
The Honorable Susan Ness
The Honorable Rachelle Chong
The Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing in response to recent press reports that the FCC may, at the request of certain broadcasters, abandon its effort to increase the quantity of programming designed to educate our nation's children. This would be a very unfortunate outcome of your children's television rulemaking and open to further question what remains of the public interest in broadcasting licenses. We want the Commission to know how strongly we feel about this rulemaking. We are concerned that the passion and resources devoted to this issue by those with a commercial stake in the outcome is causing the Commission to lose its focus on the mission of effectively implementing the Children's Television Act (CTA) of 1990.

We are particularly concerned that the Commission may succumb to the pleas of some that "quality", not "quantity", be the only test of compliance with the CTA. It is unquestionably important to eliminate definitional ambiguity. Moreover, the Commission is correct to suggest that programming aired before 7 am should not qualify. But if the Commission gives up its attempt to specify a minimum amount necessary to guarantee renewal of a broadcast license, unscrupulous broadcasters will rush in to undercut those who have worked to increase their commitment to children's educational programming. The result will be even less quality programming than we now have.

And what we now have is clearly unacceptable. The Commission recognized this reality when it originally proposed a minimum of 3 hours per week of qualifying programming be used as a guide to compliance with the CTA. This is an extremely low standard, particularly when compared to the roughly 140 hours that a typical station airs during the week. Indeed, the National Association of Broadcasters believes that the average broadcaster already exceeds this minimum, and Westinghouse has pledged to meet or exceed this minimum on CBS. Sadly, the 3-hour standard is still several hours more than many broadcasters are currently airing despite the law.

We urge you to defend the rights of children in this rulemaking, and to reject arguments against setting a clear, unambiguous 3-hour threshold for all broadcasters to meet in return for renewal of a license to use the public airwaves. Most broadcasters will gladly meet this standard, and the public will be grateful that a minimum standard has finally been set.

Sincerely,

Edward J. Markey

Sen. G. Shro

Jim McDermott

Sen. L. L. Smith

Frank Pallone

Nancy Pelosi

Rep. H. L. Hunt

Mr. M. Clayton

Carrie P. Meek

Rep. J. J. Pickens

Rep. J. J. Pickens

Sen. J. J. Pickens

Rep. J. J. Pickens

St. Louis

Rep. J. J. Pickens

Rosa L. Cantu

Rep. J. J. Pickens

Earl F. Hilliard

Rep. J. J. Pickens

Rep. J. J. Pickens

Rep. J. J. Pickens

Rep. J. J. Pickens

<u>W. L. Clay</u>	<u>Garry Kuyka</u>
<u>Lynn H. Rivers</u>	<u>Jim Moran</u>
<u>Norm Dick</u>	<u>Shelby Jackson</u>
<u>Herold Nader</u>	<u>Joe Costello</u>
<u>Ben Cardin</u>	<u>Chas Fitts</u>
<u>Phil Thompson</u>	<u>David Shaggs</u>
<u>Pete DeLoe</u>	<u>Pat Walcott</u>
<u>Tim Rumer</u>	<u>Dan Dinkin</u>
<u>Eliot L. Engel</u>	<u>William J. Casper</u>
<u>Robert G. Bonk</u>	<u>Ken Johnson</u>
<u>Nydia J. Holt</u>	<u>Walter C. Spahr</u>
<u>Blanche L. Linder</u>	<u>Chas Edwards</u>

Bill Rubish

Tom Sawyer

Wite Louey

Gary Ackers

Ed. Olsen

Robert J. Watkins

Bro Cramer

De Rosa

Ed Pastor

Amelia Brien

Ed Kennedy

Francis

Mama Vanden

Charles Stapp

Paula Sch

Jo E. Hager

Joe Dyer

William E. Torres

Gunn Sam

Ron Cohen

Willie Schenk

Tom H

Vic Fier

John

Lillian Skarpete — Charles Myers

George Brown — Harry & Waxman

Lynn C. Wadley — Paing T. Opitz

Barbara Lee Colli — Matthew B. Mathews

Leslie Raynal-Allard — Mr. H. R. Glyn

Robert E. Amos — Len Chapman

Mr. J. J. Pearson — Richard L. Watts

Bob Ford — Tom Lamb

John A. — Phyllis

C. B. Malone — Ben Hefner

Ronald T. Keller — Ray Thornton

Tom Brill — Jack Lewis

Carl C. Brown Richard Aythya

Barry E. Epler Joe Mockley

Tony Eilen Lane Evers

Tom Davis Lennie Myrle

Wally Mack A. P. M.

Mike Ward Butch

Pat Arch Major P. Davis

Frederic R. Gator James L. Boman

Joe Hummer Eugene E. Vento

St. Patrick Charles Parker

Joe J. LaDalle Edward E. Hale

Joe (1704) Math. From

Bill

Sam Farr

Tom Barnett

Neil Abernethy

Jack Reed

~~Ed Kennedy~~

Martin Anderson

Henry B. Gonzalez

James L. Oberstar

Cardiss Collins

New Men

~~Pat Danner~~

Tim Holden

Jim Berman

John Spratt

~~Bo H. H. H.~~

~~Al Swift~~

Charlie Rose

Eddie Bernice Johnson

Sherrad Brown

Donald Wayne

James L. Orr

Bob Wise

2 + 1 M.

John W. Platt

Floyd H. Blake

Charles Stenholm

Hiram Dela Cruz

Timothy W. Hill

Cornelia Brown

Henry Brown

Scotty Bask

~~Bob Filner~~
~~Bob Filner~~

Bob Filner

L.F. Payne

Karen McCann

Dick Lutter

Bill K. Brewster

~~Bill K. Brewster~~

Harold W. Volkmann

Alan C. Kildall

Pete Stack

Paul McIlhenny

Marion Wilkes

Luis V. Quintana

William H. Hinton

Eleanor H. Hest

Sam Oley Sam Minge

Mike Daye ~~John~~

Charlie Wilson L.H. Hunt

Frank Mascara ~~Condit~~
Condit

Mr. Turner ~~James~~ ~~William~~ ~~Frank~~

Elyse Cummings Rick Cummings

Paul J. Kargach Robert A. Uel

Sam H. Brown Charles Thomas Brown
Brown

Allen Tucker Jane Tucker

Harold Reed ~~John~~

Harry ~~John~~ ~~John~~
John Johnston ~~John~~

Ernesta Mavara Allen B. Mavara

Mike Castle

Christopher Hayes

T. Hutchins

Frank R. Wolf

~~Jim Dicks~~

Sheldon Berkley

Don Gilson

Mary Rankin

~~J. L. Lusk~~

Anne Hyde

~~[Signature]~~

~~[Signature]~~ Porter

~~[Signature]~~

John S. King

Frank Tejeda

Karen A. Thurman

Frank A. LoBiondo

Doug Bearden

Chen Su

Jack Quinn

~~[Signature]~~

Bill Martini

Paul Torg

Daphne Han

Cool: L. ~~Allen~~

Marcy Kaptur

Jim Wurf

William P. Rogers

Gene Taylor

Glen Browder

Bob Fandy

**Signers of letter to FCC
urging "Three 4 Kids"**
(as of May 29, 1996)

AL	Browder		Thurman		Kildee
	Bevill		Mica		Bonior
	Cramer		Gibbons		Levin
	Hilliard		Meek		Rivers
			Johnston		Conyers
			Deutsch		Collins
		GA	Hastings	MN	Minge
			Bishop		Vento
AK			Lewis		Sabo
AZ	Pastor		McKinney		Luther
AR	Lambert Lincoln	HA	Abercrombie		Peterson
	Hutchinson		Mink		Oberstar
	Thornton	ID		MS	Thompson
	Dickey	IL	Rush		Taylor
CA	Fazio		Jackson	MO	Clay
	Matsui		Lipinski		Gephardt
	Woolsey		Gutierrez		Skelton
	Miller		Collins		McCarthy
	Pelosi		Yates		Danner
	Dellums		Porter		Volkmer
	Lantos		Costello	MT	Williams
	Stark		Evans	NB	Bereuter
	Eshoo		Poshard	NC	Clayton
	Lofgren		Durbin		Rose
	Farr	IN	Viscloskey		Hefner
	Condit		Roemer		Watt
	Beilenson		Hamilton	ND	Pomeroy
	Berman		Jacobs	NJ	Andrews
	Waxman	IO	Leach		LoBiondo
	Becerra	KS			Smith
	Martinez	KY	Ward		Roukema
	Dixon		Baesler		Pallone
	Roybal-Allard	LA	Jefferson		Franks
	Torres		Fields		Martini
	Waters	ME	Longley		Torricelli
	Harman		Baldacci		Payne
	Horn	MD	Cardin		Menendez
	Millender-		Wynn	NM	Richardson
	McDonald		Hoyer	NY	Lazio
	Brown		Cummings		King
	Filner		Morella		Ackerman
CO	Schroeder	MA	Olver		Flake
	Skaggs		Neal		Nadler
CT	Kennelly		Meehan		Schumer
	Gejdenson		Markey		Towns
	DeLauro		Kennedy		Owens
	Shays		Moakley		Velazquez
DE	Castle		Studds		Maloney
FL	Peterson	MI	Stupak		Rangel
	Brown		Barcia		Serrano

	Engel		Stenholm
	Lowey		Jackson Lee
	Gilman		Gonzalez
	McNulty		Frost
	Boehlert		Bentsen
	Hinchey		Ortiz
	Slaughter		Tejeda
	LaFalce		Green
	Quinn		Johnson
	Houghton	UT	Orton
NV		VT	Sanders
OH	Hall	VA	Pickett
	Kaptur		Scott
	Stokes		Sisisky
	Brown		L. Payne
	Sawyer		Moran
	Traficant		Wolf
OK	Brewster		Davis
OR	Furse	WA	Dicks
	DeFazio		McDermott
PA	Foglietta	WV	Mollohan
	Fattah		Wise
	Borski	WI	Kleczka
	Klink		Barrett
	Clinger		Obey
	Holden	WY	
	McDade	DC	Norton
	Kanjorski	AS	Faleomavaega
	Murtha	GU	Underwood
	Coyne	PR	Romero-Barcelo
	McHale	VI	
	Doyle		
	Mascara		
RI	Kennedy		
	Reed		
SC	Spratt		
	Clyburn		
SD	Johnson		
TN	Clement		
	Gordon		
	Tanner		
	Ford		
TX	Chapman		
	Wilson		
	Bryant		
	Doggett		
	Edwards		
	Geren		
	de la Garza		
	Coleman		

**SUPPORTERS OF ADOPTING AT LEAST 3 HOURS OF CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING
AS THE STANDARD FOR RENEWAL OF BROADCAST LICENSES---**

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry - represents 5,200 child and adolescent psychiatrists

American Association of School Administrators - represents 16,000 school superintendents, central administrators, principals, and other school leaders

American Psychiatric Association - represents 41,000 psychiatrists worldwide

Center for Media Literacy - has 2,000 active members and provides service to 10,000 individuals and institutions

Consumer Federation of America - coalition of 240 consumer groups with combined membership of 50 million

National Association of Child Advocates - represents 32 state-based child advocacy organizations

National Association for the Education of Young Children - has 90,000 members and a network of 450 local, state, and regional affiliated childhood organizations

National Association of Elementary School Principals - represents 26,000 elementary and middle school educators

National Association for Family and Community Education - 43,000 members

National Black Child Development Institute - affiliate network of 42 cities

National Council of La Raza - represents 200 community-based organizations

National Education Association - 2.2 million members

National PTA - 7 million members

Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ - union of churches with 1.5 million members

Children Now

Children's Television Workshop

U. S. Catholic Conference

**STATEMENT OF
REP. EDWARD J. MARKEY
PRESS CONFERENCE ON CHILDREN'S TV
"Three 4 Kids"
May 29, 1996**

Today we take a hop, skip and a jump closer to the goal of setting a minimum standard for broadcasters, giving teeth to the Children's Television Act of 1990. Broadcasters who are seeking renewal of their public license from the FCC deserve to know what the public interest requires when it comes to serving the educational and informational needs of children. What we're fighting for is *at least* 3 hours of educational TV for kids *per week* on every station holding a license from the public. There is clear momentum in favor of a "Three 4 Kids" rule, as we will demonstrate in just a moment.

In the past we did not have to specify rules for such things. Serving children used to be an obligation which every broadcaster shouldered gladly, without complaint, in return for being granted the exceptional, protected status as "public trustee" of a slice of the spectrum.

But somewhere in the 1980's, about the time a former chairman of the FCC declared that a television was just another appliance -- "a toaster with pictures" -- to be bought and sold as a commodity, service to children began to suffer and all too many broadcasters lost any shared notion of what constituted the public interest.

That is why, in 1990, I asked Congress to step in and pass the Children's Television Act. This was a proud moment for Congress. In that Act, we required, for the first time, that the broadcaster must serve the educational and informational needs of children as a condition of license renewal.

Unfortunately, cynical attempts by some broadcasters to submit cartoons such as *The Flintstones* and *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers* as educational programming have persisted. In the only independent analysis of this subject, researchers at the University of California, Santa Barbara found no increase in the number of hours claimed by broadcasters in 1994 compared to 1992, and some broadcasters were still making educational claims for *Yogi Bear* and *Biker Mice From Mars*.

Clearly, the FCC needed to strengthen its rules. Reed Hundt, chairman of the FCC, deserves credit for stepping in at this point and crafting a proposed rule that would help everyone. Families would get quality programming for kids, and broadcasters would be given clear standards and definitions which they could rely upon when seeking renewal of their license. Although many in this room, myself included, considered the proposed standard of 3 hours *per week* to be disappointingly low, it was still a clear standard for kids.

That was April 1995. It is now almost June 1996, and the FCC has still not adopted the "Three 4 Kids" rule. This is not for lack of trying. Chairman Hundt has fought for this rule relentlessly. Commissioner Ness has also battled for children and taken a firm stand on the side of "Three 4 Kids." President Clinton, in his only written comment on any FCC rule, sent a letter in October urging that "at least"

3 hours per week be adopted by the FCC for kids. Peggy Charren, founder of Action for Children's Television and one of our guests today, will tell you in a moment how hard she has fought to see this rule adopted.

In fact, we have with us today representatives of organizations that have knocked on more doors and sent more letters on behalf of the "Three 4 Kids" rule than practically any issue in Washington today. Many of these good people participated with me last fall when we declared last October 11 to be Children's TV Day in Washington and two dozen children's TV advocates concentrated solely on this issue, holding a press conference and

meetings with Commissioners and the White House urging action. I'm talking about these people standing behind me. I'm talking about [names of groups and participants].

the 7 million member National PTA;
the 26,000 member National Association of Elementary School Principals;
The American Academy of Pediatrics
The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
The Center for Media Education
Children Now
Children's Television Workshop
American Psychiatric Association
The National Association for Family and Community Education

And I'm talking about many others who have helped along the way, like Shari Lewis, creator of *Lambchop*, and Bob McGrath, host of *Sesame Street*. Bob recently sent to me a petition signed by over 600 teachers, parents and child caregivers that he had gathered at the University of Wisconsin Early Childhood Conference, urging support for the Three for Kids rule. "I was overwhelmed," Bob wrote, "by the dissatisfaction these people--who spend the majority of their time working with young children--felt about commercial television. The enclosed petition...is evidence that the public is eager to see commercial broadcasters make an honest investment in our nation's children."

So, here we are again, back for more. But this time, we have something extra, something that took a little work, but something which should make a difference to those who are still part of the problem, but would like to be part of the solution. I am about to unroll, literally, ten feet of signatures that I and my colleagues have gathered in the House of Representatives demanding that the FCC adopt a "Three 4 Kids" rule, plain and simple. No more excuses. At last count, we had 220 Members of Congress signing this letter, and the number of Members that ask to join keeps growing.

This is a MAJORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

It is not easy to gather so many signatures, no matter how compelling the cause. In fact, it is a logistical nightmare, as my staff will tell you. One of my interns, Elizabeth Malaspina, actually broke a shoe and nearly sprained an ankle in her dedication to amassing this unequivocal statement on behalf of "Three 4 Kids." I personally gathered more than half of these signatures, which means that "Three 4 Kids" has been a major topic of conversation on the House floor for the last two months. Congresswoman Blanche Lambert Lincoln, 8 months pregnant with twins, personally expended her precious energy in this cause at crucial moments. Congresswoman Morella was an early signatory on this petition and is here today to emphasize that this is a joint effort involving both sides of the aisle, Republican and Democrat.

So we would like to unroll this document now, and make it official, that the House of Representatives has come together around the issue of Children's TV and is sending this message to the FCC, that a majority of this body is not interested in vague, unenforceable guidelines on children's TV.

MAKE IT CLEAR, MAKE IT SIMPLE, MAKE IT "THREE 4 KIDS."